

AIR FORCE SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS (AFSATCOM) SYSTEM

GENERAL: The AFSATCOM System is a satellite-based, operational, UHF system that provides command and control communications for the National Command Authority, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Commanders in Chief of the U.S. nuclear forces and other selected high priority users. The satellites used in the AFSATCOM system support other missions beside AFSATCOM. These non-dedicated satellites include Fleet Satellite Communications System satellites in geostationary orbits, Satellite Data System (SDS) satellites in highly inclined polar orbits, and other classified host spacecraft. Together, these satellites provide communications for users in the entire northern hemisphere and to 70 degrees south latitude in the southern hemisphere. Terminals are installed in strategic bombers, airborne and ground command centers, Minuteman missile launch control centers, reconnaissance aircraft, nuclear weapons storage sites (Army funded) and in Navy aircraft (TACAMO) providing communications connectivity to the submarine fleet (Navy funded).

MISSION: This program consolidates the operation of the existing AFSATCOM system and the procurement of replacement transponders to satisfy critical needs of the National Command Authorities and the military Commanders in Chief for reliable, secure, survivable, worldwide communications.

PROGRAM

STATUS: Five FLTSATCOM satellites are on orbit and providing satisfactory AFSATCOM connectivity. Sufficient replenishment spacecraft are built or planned to continue the operation of the AFSATCOM system until Milstar can adequately support SIOP operations. The AFSATCOM system reached Final Operational Capability (FOC) 1 July 1984.

FUNDING (\$ in Millions):

See Milstar for procurement information

AFSATCOM System IOC: May 79

AFSATCOM System FOC: Jul 84

CONTRACTORS: Rockwell International - AFSATCOM Terminal
Development/Production

TRW, Inc. - Fleet Satellite Communications System satellites

Hughes Aircraft - Satellite Data System satellites

